AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the above-identified application.

Claims:

Please cancel claims 16-19, 21, 23 and 25.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of reducing superoxide damage to a bacterial cell, comprising the steps of

a. vector-based expression of a nucleic acid encoding the YggX polypeptide as set forth in ~~gene~~ SEQ ID NO:11, wherein the vector-based expression is in the bacterial cell, wherein the cells are rendered more resistant to superoxide damage relative to cells lacking endogenous YggX gene expression, wherein the cells comprise an oxygen-labile enzyme comprising an Fe-S cluster, and wherein there is no increased superoxide dismutase activity in the cells, ~~is relative to the cells in the absence of the vector-based expression of YggX gene and wherein the vector-based expression is in a bacterial cell~~ and

b. examining the oxygen-labile enzyme to determine the amount of oxidative damage.

2.- 26. (Cancelled)

27. (NEW) A method of increasing the resistance of a bacterial enzyme having an oxygen labile Fe-S cluster/center to oxidative damage, comprising

a. co-expressing the enzyme with a vector-based expression of a nucleic acid encoding the YggX polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO:11, wherein the vector-based expression is in a bacterial cell, wherein the cells are rendered more resistant to superoxide damage relative to cells lacking endogenous YggX gene

expression, and wherein there is no increased superoxide dismutase activity in the cells, and

b. examining the oxygen-labile enzyme to determine the amount of oxidative damage.